Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A steel cord for reinforcing a synchronous belt, said steel cord ~~comprising~~ consisting of:

at least two strands twisted together with N_c twists per unit length in a first lay direction to form said strands, each of said strands ~~comprising~~ consisting of at least two steel filaments having a diameter between 30 μm and 250 μm, said filaments being twisted together with N_s twists per unit length in a second lay direction, opposite to said first lay direction,

wherein, the number of twists per unit length a strand locally obtains during twisting of said cord is less than N_c+N_s such that when said cord is [[being]] subjected to twenty load cycles, each load cycle starting at 0.2% of the breaking load of said steel cord going up to 20% of the breaking load of said steel cord and returning to 0.2% of the breaking load of said steel cord, said steel cord has a structural elongation on the return side of said twentieth load cycle of below 0.06% at 0.2% of the breaking load of said steel cord.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The steel cord as in claim 1, wherein a load-elongation curve on said second to twentieth cycle remains in between two parallel, straight limiting lines said lines, being 0.06% of elongation apart.

4. (Previously Presented) The steel cord as in claim 1, wherein a straight line connecting the starting point and the turning point at said twentieth load cycle has a slope equivalent to an elongation modulus of more than 150 000 MPa.

5. (Previously Presented) The steel cord as in claim 1, wherein a straight line connecting the starting point and the turning point at said twentieth load cycle has a slope equivalent to an elongation modulus of more than 170 000 MPa.

6. (Previously Presented) The steel cord as in claim 1, wherein the elongation at 0.2% of the breaking load of the cord after the first cycle is below 0.03%.

7. (Withdrawn – Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing a steel cord for reinforcing a synchronous belt according to claim 1, ~~said strands further having a breaking load, said strands having a first lay direction and a first number of twists per unit length in said cord N_e, said filaments having a second lay direction and a second number of twists per unit length in said strand N_s, said second lay direction being opposite to said first lay direction,~~ said process comprising the steps of:

- Providing said strands with a number of twists per unit length n_s lower or equal to the ~~second~~ number of twists per unit length N_s on strand spools (2)
- Unwinding said spools (2) in a twister pay-off (1) with a pay-off tension
- Assembling said strands at an assembly point (8) before an entrance pulley (9) of a bunching machine (13)
- Winding said cord on a cord spool (12) after passing a reversing pulley (10)

characterised in that

said pay-off tension is higher than 15 % of the breaking load of the strand for shifting the final lay formation closer to the assembly point.

8. (Withdrawn) The method of manufacturing according to claim 7, wherein the final lay formation is shifted to the assembly point by putting the said entrance pulley (9) or said reversing pulley (10) under an angle with respect to the plane formed by entering (51) and exiting cord (52).

9. (Withdrawn) The method of manufacturing according to claim 7, wherein the twists applied by said bunching machine on said strands are uninterruptedly lead to the exit of said twister pay-off.

Claims 10-13. (Canceled)

14. (Withdrawn) The use of steel cords as specified in claim 1, as reinforcement in a synchronous belt.

15. (New) The steel cord as in claim 1, wherein the number of twists per unit length a strand locally obtains during twisting of said cord is equal to or less than N_s.